

REMARKS

Summary

Claims 10-20 have been rewritten and Claims 21-27 have been added. Claims 10-27 are pending after entry of this amendment. No new matter has been added as a result of this amendment.

Objection to Claims

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the claims for various informalities. Applicant has corrected a majority of the informalities noted by the Examiner. Applicant has also corrected other grammatical or typographical errors and changed the formatting slightly without changing the substance of the claims. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objections to Claim 14.

Claim 14 recites that the guide faces, inclined in the same direction relative to the base, are formed at the tops of the plurality of guides of the fitting member. The Examiner objected to the use of "the same direction" and "tops", and required replacement by "an equal direction" and "the top", respectively. However, the guide faces being inclined in "an equal direction," as suggested by the Examiner, is at a minimum much more awkward than the present recitation that the guide faces are inclined in "the same direction."

In addition, since the guide faces and the guides are plural, the guide faces being formed at the top of the guides, as suggested by the Examiner, is incorrect. The Examiner's wording would be correct if only one guide was present and one or more guide faces were present on that one top, which is not the case in the arrangement recited in Claim 14.

Thus, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objections to Claim 14.

Applicant notes, in addition that since the base is part of the side wall, the change required by the Examiner in Claim 18 from reciting the side wall of the fitting member to reciting the side wall of the base is superfluous. However, in the interests of expediency, Applicant has rewritten Claim 18 in the manner required by the Examiner.

Rejection of Claims

In the Office Action, Claims 10-11, 13-14 and 18-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Rogers (U.S. Patent Application 2001/0025545). Claims 12, 15-17, and 20 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but the Examiner indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in an independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections to the claims.

Claim 10 specifically recites that gaps are provided between adjacent guides of the fitting member and that projections of the knob are able to be positioned in the gaps to enable the knob and the fitting member to be coupled to each other.

Despite the Examiner's assertions, Rogers does not anticipate or disclose an arrangement in which a gap is present between any of the guides. Nor does Rogers anticipate or disclose an arrangement in which the knob projections are able to be positioned in the gaps to enable the knob and the fitting member to be coupled to each other. The Examiner asserts that A8 of his marked up figure of Rogers shows gaps. However, as is clearly shown by the figure, each of the guides terminates only at another guide – i.e. the guides contact each other and no gap is positioned between adjacent guides. The label A8 points only towards a thin portion of one of the wedge-shaped guides rather than an area between the guides.

Moreover, Claim 10 is directed towards a fitting structure for knobs in which the knob can be readily fitted to the fitting member by pressing axially on the knob. The gaps permit the projections, guided by the guides, to be caught between the guides at a certain point. Rogers, on the other hand, is directed towards an entirely different arrangement: a hand wheel for an adjustment mechanism that is intended to stop children from tampering with the hand wheel using the same concept as that of child proof caps on medicine bottles -- merely twisting the hand wheel causes increased tightening. The fitting member and the knob of Roger's arrangement are not coupled together, as is the arrangement recited in Claim 10. As the arrangements are different, and are motivated by entirely different reasons, Applicant submits that additionally there is no motivation to add gaps to the only arrangement disclosed by Rogers.

For at least these reasons, Rogers does not anticipate or disclose the arrangement of Claim 10. Thus, Claim 10 is patentable over the cited references.

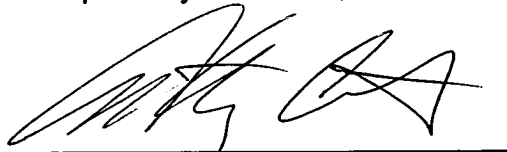
Furthermore, Claim 13 recites the projections of the knob are arranged to form a cross. The Examiner asserts that the projections of Rogers are arranged to form a cross. However, the projections of Rogers, on the other hand, are in no way arranged to resemble a cross. To the contrary the projections of Rogers, like the guides, are arranged in a circle. For at least this reason, Rogers does not anticipate or disclose the arrangement of Claim 13. Thus, Claim 13 is independently patentable over the cited references.

Nor does Rogers anticipate or disclose the arrangements of Claims 21-27. Thus, Claims 21-27 are independently patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments above, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seek an early allowance thereof. If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application and believes that a telephone interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned agent or attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony P. Curtis', is written over a horizontal line.

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